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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 06 USNATO 000236

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TAGS: [KCFE](#) [NATO](#) [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [OSCE](#) [RS](#)
SUBJECT: JUNE 24, 2008 HLTF: ALLIES UNANIMOUS ON CONTINUING
"ACTIVE PATIENCE" ON CFE FOR NOW

REF: (A) STATE 047325 (GUIDANCE)

Classified By: A/DCM W. SCOTT REID III, reasons 1.4 (b and d)

11. (C) SUMMARY. At the June 24 HLTF meeting and meetings on the margins, Allies agreed to continue NATO,s current approach to dealing with the impasse brought on by the Russian Federation,s suspension of implementation of (i.e. compliance with) the CFE Treaty by:

-- continuing Allies, unaltered support for the parallel actions package and related U.S.)Russia bilateral efforts (with no support for substantive sweeteners for Russia that would go beyond the existing package of proposals);

-- sending a firm message at every opportunity, including the July 1-2 OSCE Annual Security Review Conference, that Moscow needs to engage constructively on NATO,s parallel actions package if Russia wants to see the Adapted CFE Treaty come into force;

-- Unambiguously rejecting Baluyevskiy,s &proposal8 to eliminate Russia,s flank sub-ceiling by including all of Russian territory in the area of application nominally in the &adapted flank8 with its full national equipment ceiling and designating this its new &flank8 limit;

-- Continuing to take Russia to task for its failure to implement the current CFE Treaty, while at the same time NATO States Parties have continued to do so.

12. (C) On other issues:

-- Allies agreed, with regard to Russian President Medvedev,s speech in Germany on June 5 suggesting a &new8 European security treaty, that what was described seems like a rehash of ideas from the 1990s. In meetings on the margins, key Allies made it clear that they did not believe this proposal would lead to a document equivalent to the CFE Treaty. U.S. HLTF Representative State/VCI DAS Karin L. Look noted that the Medvedev speech did not present anything substantially new, that circumventing legally-binding CFE in favor of a primarily hortatory agreement would not be useful, and that there was also a risk that Russia would use such a treaty to &leap frog8 beyond CFE and its requirement that the Istanbul Commitments be fulfilled.

-- Allies agreed to continue previous practice by allowing new invitees Albania and Croatia to sit in the HLTF as observers (after the July 9 signing of NATO Accession

Protocols).

-- U.S. Rep Look informed the HLTF of the U.S. rotational training in Romania and Bulgaria starting in May and finishing in October 2008. END SUMMARY.

13. (C) CONTACTS and BILATERALS.

-- Spain: Rep Mor Sola notified the HLTF that Russian Arms Control Representative Mikhail Ulyanov in Vienna noted in the June 11 meeting of the Forum for Security and Cooperation (FSC) that Russia would be presenting more details of the &new security treaty Russian President Medvedev talked about in his June 5 speech in Berlin⁸ at the July 1-2 OSCE Annual Security Review Conference (ASRC). Spain also noted the format of the ASRC and highlighted the three sessions and the keynote speakers for each session. One of those sessions is on the &Future of Arms Control.⁸ (Note: The actual session is titled: The present state of arms control arrangements, CSBMs and the Security Dialogue in the OSCE area. End Note.)

-- Turkey: Rep Gun announced that DFM Kislyak and team visited Ankara on 12 May. Kislyak did not raise any new issues while noting that Russia did not like the parallel actions package but will continue to work with the U.S.; that flank sub-ceilings were an obstacle; and that NATO continued the call for fulfillment of Istanbul commitments (as recently as the March 28 NAC statement). Russia sought Turkey,s opinion on the Russian call for abolishing the &flank⁸ sub-ceilings for Russia. The Turkish rep noted for Allies the constant efforts of the Russian Federation to play

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Allies against one another, saying that Russia did not trust NATO, and that LT GEN Buzhinskiy stated the difficulties Russia foresaw in addressing all of Russia,s concerns after it agreed to the parallel actions package. Turkey responded to DFM Kislyak that the CFE Treaty may address all the issues raised and that the CFE Treaty is based around the flank regime. Turkey can only envisage the CFE Treaty with a flank regime.

-- Germany: Rep Biontino briefed Allies about the bilateral meeting on a broad range of arms control topics (including, inter alia, CFE, post-START and INF) in Moscow between Russian Director of Disarmament Antonov and German Director Luedeking. In that meeting, Antonov stated his skepticism about the possibility of reaching an agreement on the CFE parallel actions package with the U.S. and noted that the NAC Statement was a step backwards. He also stated that the &frozen conflicts⁸ should be completely disassociated from the CFE Treaty. Russia again noted that the flank restrictions placed on Russia were outdated and needed to be changed.

-- U.S.: Rep Look informed the HLTF that A/S Fried had proposed to Antonov that they meet one-on-one in Stockholm in May (while Fried would be there on other business) but that Antonov declined to accept. A/S Fried recently had proposed dates in July, which Antonov also rejected. Subsequently, Antonov proposed that they meet in late July in New York City. That has been agreed.

-- Norway: Rep Listerud reported that DFM Kislyak visited Norway on May 19, with CFE being a major topic of discussion. Norway noted that Russia did not raise anything new in their discussions.

-- Romania: Rep Micula reported that Romania,s rep in Vienna met with Russian Arms Control rep Ulyanov on June 10. In that meeting, Russia &pretended⁸ not to be satisfied with the lack of progress on the parallel actions package negotiations with the United States. Micula strongly noted Romania,s disgruntlement with Russian General Baluyevskiy,s proposal on the flank solution, which the Russians claimed was initially made without Moscow,s support but in fact was

gaining acceptance there. Ulyanov also stated that Russia had once again tried to start moving ammunition from Kolbasna but the Transnistrian authorities would not give their approval.

-- Denmark: Rep Roden announced that Russia had demarched Copenhagen on June 13 requesting Denmark's opinion of the Medvedev proposal of a new security treaty in Europe. Denmark noted that the interlocutor delivering the demarche was not given any kind words to send back to Moscow, but was told that Denmark strongly supported the current CFE regime.

14. (C) THE WAY AHEAD. The Chair (Erdmann) introduced the agenda item by informing Allies of the upcoming CFE events that Russia needed to comply with, e.g. the provision of Flank Data on July 1st. He noted the current strategy adopted by the HLTF called attention to a possible emergency meeting of the HLTF if the need arose before the next scheduled HLTF meeting in September.

-- The Netherlands Rep (Kleinjan) led off the discussion and highlighted the opportunity for the Alliance to continue its unified approach of active patience at the July 1-2 ASRC and then made a proposal that surprised all Allies. Kleinjan suggested that the U.S. should work with Russia to 1) establish a calendar of bilateral meetings to put discussion of the Parallel Actions Package on an active schedule before the end of the year, and 2) expand the bilateral format to include, at U.S. invitation, some interested Allies, at least on occasion. No Ally specifically endorsed the Dutch suggestion in the meeting, but none rejected it either including France and Germany who have pressed privately for a Quad Russia format).

-- German rep Biontino strongly urged European support for the U.S. bilateral effort and urged Allies to stay on message, be consistent, firm, unified, and cohesive. He also said that holding those bilateral meetings on a regular basis

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would be important.

-- U.S. rep Look agreed with Germany concerning unity and cohesiveness. She also stated that since our goal is to get Russia to engage, the U.S. certainly is open to suggestions on how best to do that, including any suggestions on frequency and format. At this point, rep Look returned to an idea she had raised previously: the JCG has little to do (because of Russia's failure to implement CFE) and thus four meetings a month seems excessive. While one meeting a month would suffice to make clear that Russia's failures to comply with its CFE obligations are unacceptable, the extra meetings are being used by Russian rep Ulyanov for troublemaking and by others merely trying to fill the time. This is not useful and could prove counterproductive in the longer term. Concerning how to proceed in the JCG if Russia (as we expect) does not provide Flank Data in July, Look suggested that national statements) not a new NATO statement) would be the best course of action to each act of non-compliance.

-- The UK Rep (Ford) did not expand on any of the ideas presented except to say that there is a balance to be struck and that the UK shared the U.S. analysis on how to react regarding flank data.

-- France (Grand) stated that it was concerned by the Russian Federation's apparent lack of will to maintain the CFE Treaty. Grand urged all to use the JCG to comment on Russian failings in order to maintain pressure on Russia. France emphasized that the ball was in Russia's court and that the Alliance had been quite generous in its proposal. France also noted that Russia had mentioned that nothing would happen during the U.S. election process, and stated that the actions taken to move the parallel actions package along couldn't wait for U.S. politics, which means 9-12 months,

which would be too late and reactive. The French urged Russia to make positive use of this time.

-- Romania (Micula) surprised the HLTF with a helpful intervention that epitomized the views expressed during the course of the HLTF. He said that NATO should continue on its current course unless: 1) there is a breakthrough between Russia and the U.S. on the package; 2) Russia elevates its non-compliance to a new level; 3) Russia withdraws from the Treaty; or 4) a CFE State Party moves toward ratification. Meanwhile, Allies should continue to send Russia the firm message recorded in the NAC statement, including at the OSCE ASRC meeting, and continue to register concerns about Russia's non-compliance in the JCG. Micula emphasized that the parallel actions package should not be allowed to be discussed piecemeal in the JCG)the plan needs to remain as a package and be negotiated as a package.

-- Greece (Daskarolis) followed with a strong statement supporting taking opportunities to send clear messages to Moscow, sharing the Romanian view.

-- Hungary (Molner) also echoed the sentiment to continue with the parallel actions package with a unified front. Hungary encouraged Allies to practice &active patience⁸ and looked forward to information on dates for U.S.-Russia bilateral meetings. In concluding, Hungary cautioned Allies against opening &new channels⁸ for negotiations.

-- Turkey (Gun) encouraged Allies to stay the course and register Russian non-compliance on 1 July if, as expected, supplemental data is not provided (which, according to the flank agreement, is due from mid-June to July 1 and which States Parties have grown accustomed to receiving as late as mid-July, when Russia distributed it last year). Turkey continues to believe that another NATO statement would not be of value and that the Allies should use the ASRC to reflect NATO's unity and cohesion with national statements. The Allies need to try to get Russia to &do something.⁸ Gun stated clearly that if the U.S. thought broader participation in its bilateral meetings would be helpful, Turkey would support the U.S., provided Turkey's participation would not be taken to imply a mistrust of the U.S.

-- Belgium (Renaux) also echoed the call for unity and

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cohesion while supporting the parallel actions package and &active patience.⁸

15. (C) Medvedev's Speech. Allies acknowledged that Russia is presently not engaging seriously with the U.S. (or anybody else) on CFE and are concerned about the prospect that Moscow may follow through on Putin's threat in Bucharest to withdraw from the Treaty if Allies do not begin to ratify A/CFE soon. That said, these fears have not caused any Ally to consider additional concessions. The dominant reading of the situation in Moscow is that Medvedev has not made up his mind about how to proceed on CFE. Several (U.S., France, Germany, UK, Greece, Turkey, Netherlands, and Denmark) noted that while the constructive tone of Medvedev's Berlin speech was welcomed (including reference to &Euro-Atlantic⁸ regional security, talk of a new European Security Treaty looked like old wine in new bottles. None thought that this new treaty could or should replace the CFE regime. Netherlands noted that in Vienna, Ulyanov commented to them that he did not know what Medvedev meant. U.S. rep Look noted that Russia had floated similar proposals 10 years ago. Greece stated that a new European security treaty was a bad idea, that we can't ignore what has been achieved, and it would be difficult to build new security architecture. On this point, Germany came across loud and clear: if CFE were lost, it could not be replaced.

16. (C) HLTF Seminar/Retreat. All Allies endorsed the idea of conducting an HLTF Seminar/Retreat sometime in the fall in

Romania, but agreed that no decision would be taken before the September HLTF meeting. The U.S. highlighted that the agenda will need to be carefully managed and the timing was paramount. Regarding the agenda, it was suggested that some Allies put forth Food-For-Thought papers to propose topics for discussion. U.S. Rep Look agreed to the purpose behind the suggestion and tentatively agreed to the I.S. request for a U.S. paper. Discussion noted that a seminar/retreat in October, versus later would allow reps to brainstorm, focusing on the near-term, and not require the HLTF to get involved in negotiating text for the OSCE and NATO Ministerial meetings in late November or early December.

¶7. (SBU) NEXT MEETINGS. In an attempt to schedule the meetings of the HLTF for the remainder of the year, a tentative schedule, which the U.S influenced heavily, was proposed:

- September 11 (agreed after silence period ended);
- October) Retreat (or an HLTF meeting) should be planned for week of 13 October;
- November 13 (T); and
- December 11.

All meeting dates will be vetted through the NATO master planner for the scheduling of dates, time, and room availability.

¶8. (C) ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

A) The Chair (Erdmann) announced that on July 9, the Accession Protocols for Albania and Croatia will be signed. It is customary that these two Allies be invited to attend formal NATO meetings as observers after the protocols are signed. Their inclusion for HLTF meetings seemed to be accepted without question as there was no real discussion questioning this procedure.

B) U.S. rep Look provided a brief announcement notifying Allies of the units, size of the deployment, and timeframe of U.S. forces rotating into Romania and Bulgaria this summer for training (May-October).

¶9. (C) One other interesting side note was the NATO-arranged meeting between Rep Look and Laurendeau with Andrei Zagorski, a professor at the Russian Foreign Ministry,s Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MIGIMO). Zagorski conducted interviews with NATO staff as well as the U.S. HLTF Head of Delegation (on deep background and with NATO Deputy Public Affairs Advisor present). In his discussions, Zagorski said that he thought President Putin had been convinced by the MOD that the CFE Treaty unfairly constrained Russia. He said that he believed NATO needed to do a better job in its public diplomacy: NATO had not provided any

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effective counter to Russian arguments that an enlarged NATO constituted a threat to Russia. In fact, Zagorski commented, if you look at actual equipment holdings, not permitted ceilings, the new NATO had less CFE TLE than the old NATO, but you would never be able to figure that out from NATO,s public statements.

¶10. (C) BILATERAL MEETINGS PRIOR TO THE HLTF. Prior to the HLTF, the U.S. conducted bilateral meetings with Romania, Turkey and Norway.

-- In the meeting with Norway, Rep Look asked Norway about the Russian (Baluyevskiy,s) flank proposal. Without hesitation the Norwegian rep snapped &rubbish8 and when asked if he knew how the Turks felt about it, the Norwegian responded &double rubbish.8 Concerning whether Norway would want to be with the U.S. during bilateral negotiations with Russia; Norway was quite uncomfortable with this approach as it would single out Norway (as opposed to the Alliance as a whole) for more attention by Russia.

-- Look, Laurendeau and Romanian rep Micula discussed at

length how to make the proposed HLTF seminar as productive as possible if it occurs, and what the most appropriate timing might be for such a session. Micula had already concluded that October would be the most feasible moment for an off site, allowing time for an HLTF meeting in Brussels in November prior to the December Ministerials. He thought that Allies would want to use the informal setting to develop additional ideas to help convince Russia to engage on the parallel actions package; we would also want to consider how to manage the Ministerials. Micula and the U.S. team agreed that we did not want to use the event to brainstorm on a CFE II: the idea is to find a way to save the current Treaty, not give it up.

-- Turkish rep Gun brushed off the Baluyevskiy flank proposal as the equivalent of eliminating the flank regime. He underscored that Turkey could not take the Adapted CFE Treaty to Parliament if it appeared the flank provisions were being eliminated. Regarding possibilities for eliciting more constructive Russian engagement on the parallel actions package, Gun suggested that Russia was playing a waiting game in the face of the U.S. elections. NATO Allies were doing the right thing in continuing to implement CFE and trying to save it; no European Security Treaty, such as Medvedev had hinted at, would come close to being CFE's equivalent. Asked what he thought of the idea of alternative formats for the U.S.-Russian talks, Gun said flatly that he trusted the U.S. and did not think alternatives would be better: the problem is not the format; rather the problem is that Russia is not ready to engage.⁸ Both Gun and Norwegian counterparts were wary of the idea of a flank group meeting with Russia (that is, the U.S., Russia, Norway/Turkey); and also worried about a Quad plus Russia format.

11. (C) Meeting involving France, Germany, UK, and U.S (QUAD):

-- The U.S. asked Allies what they thought the goals of an HLTF retreat might be, noting we thought it should be informal, and should allow opportunities to think about how to get the Russians to engage and use the Ministerials effectively. Germany, UK, and France in the Quad made clear that they did not want to use the retreat to consider the possibility of an alternative to the CFE Treaty. Several expressed fear of giving any hint to Russia that a lesser alternative might be available that would give Russia the collective limits on NATO Allies that it seeks, without the price tag of fulfillment of its remaining Istanbul commitments or real constraint on Russia's own forces. In fact, all Allies appeared to be of one view on the central point: CFE serves Europe's interests and we should try to keep it, not consider other possibilities that will never approach CFE's scope and effect.

-- Concerning the way ahead, France noted that there were four scenarios that we could be facing: 1) continue as we are (simply implement the Treaty) until something happens, referred to as passive patience;⁸ 2) accept Russia's

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positions and move forward; 3) press forward on the basis of the Parallel Actions Package and continue with CFE implementation even if Russia does not, and continue with annotating in the JCG all of Russia's acts of non-compliance (active patience⁸); and 4) start over from scratch which is risky and difficult for governments to accept negotiating a new treaty when Russia does not fulfill its current Treaty obligations. All agreed that option 3 was the only option. U.S. Rep Look noted that the Treaty dies daily as suspension continues and that we must find a way to bring Russia back to the Treaty. Germany responded that the NAC Statement of 28 March was intended to bring Russia back into compliance. The UK and Germany noted that the question is how to keep Russia engaged. All agreed that the Russian President's speech in Berlin did not appear to be a serious

arms control proposal; it had more of an OSCE political character, like the Charter for European Security. In each capital, bilateral meetings with Russia were conducted and in each case key Russian leaders could not expand on Medvedev's proposal. However, all members of the Quad agreed that a new treaty could not be a substitute for CFE.

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